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Subject: Get Your Serve On - Making the World a Better Place



**Customer Relationship Management with Vision
 Astute Planning. Flawless Execution.
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Get Your Serve On

For this edition of the Customer Centricity newsletter we chose to depart from the typical theme of providing useful business concepts and techniques and instead share something more meaningful: Making the world a better place!



On March 18, 2007, eleven members of the First Baptist Church, of Hudson, NH boarded a plane headed for Mississippi to build houses with Habitat for Humanity. The team from FBC consisted of: Al Daigle, Bev Dion, Steve Greene, Reverend Jim Harrington, Mike Ledoux, George Mandeville, Bruce and Terry Mostrom, Kathi O'Donnell, Norm Poisson and Craig Bailey. We departed New Hampshire with mixed emotions of anxiety (what exactly will we be doing?) and anticipation (the excitement of helping others in need). On day 1 our expectations were more than realized. The FBC team, alongside over 50 college students on spring break, worked under the guidance of 4 Habitat for Humanity construction supervisors. After a brief orientation, we broke up into a few teams, each assigned to work on houses in various stages of construction. One team worked on a house to finish up on the shingling and siding. Another team framed and installed

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We strengthen overall company performance through better service delivery and management.

We boost efficiencies in front-line customer service and technical support teams, order processing, fulfillment, field service, logistics and other key operations functions.

In short, we align the resources of your organization to exceed your customers' expectations in the most effective and efficient manner possible.

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the roof trusses on a second house. The third team worked on a house that had just been framed, to install roof trusses then put down tarpaper and shingles.

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The teamwork was absolutely amazing. As soon as a board was laid down there would be several people jumping in to pound nails. Throughout the entire week there was nothing but positive energy, with each person looking for the next thing he or she could do next to help get the job done. I've never seen a group of people work harder in my life, and for free!!! This goes to show that it is NOT about the money. It is about having that feeling of truly contributing to society: making the world a better place. Proof of the team's desire to serve was the fact that on Friday (our last day), the construction supervisors said that we would finish building at 2:30pm so that we could cleanup the work sites. At 2:30, no one wanted to stop working. Everyone wanted to keep going to finish up as much construction as possible before cleaning up.

While the week was an absolute success, we barely scratched the surface. The message that needs to be carried forward is: THE JOB IS NOT DONE! Those of us not in the Gulf Coast region have for the most part forgotten about the aftermath of Katrina, under the assumption that everything is back to normal. Everything is NOT back to normal.

A brief recap of the situation, as it was told to us by a volunteer leader. About 18 months ago Hurricane Katrina hit communities on the Gulf Coast of the US. There are (or were) 95,000 homes in Jackson County, Mississippi, of which 90% were damaged or destroyed. Only 1,500 homeowners had flood insurance. The ports on the Gulf of Mexico were closed for 3 months due to debris (there literally were houses lined up and floating in the ocean!). You can still find housing developments with over 200 cement slabs where houses once stood. If you drive down the streets of Pascagoula, MS, for example, you will find reminders of the destruction that took place and the work that still needs to be done. You will find a boarded up high school alongside vacant and boarded up strip malls. Strip malls that are open have banners for signs where neon lights once hung and frames of neon signs with wires dangling in the breeze. You will find boarded up and vacant dwellings, or buildings and dwellings with the doors and windows wide open as they continue to air out from the moisture that resulted from the flooding. In front yards you will see FEMA trailers which are connected up to public water and sewage as houses remain uninhabitable. You will see roofs covered with tarps due to shingles being completely stripped off from the high winds of Katrina.

Our team stayed in the Pascagoula, MS recreation center being run by Operation TLC founded and run by Tammy Agard and Annie Card (formerly of Peterborough, NH). The

center has over 60 makeshift bunks and an endless supply of water for volunteers. The 4 power outlets were in constant use by volunteers charging cell phones, iPods and laptop computers. FEMA tarps serve as shower curtains and separate the sleeping area from the gym and TV room. The center also provides a FEMA provided wireless network.

In closing, the Gulf Coast communities of Mississippi still need our help. To plan your mission trip, check out one or more of the following organizations: Habitat For Humanity (www.habitat.org), Operation TLC (www.operationtlc.org), Central Church of Christ in Pascagoula, MS (www.123jesus.com) and David's kitchen, founded and operated by David Kilbern, a member of the Central Church of Christ, where, for only \$6, volunteers are fed 3 square meals a day. So, go to Mississippi and serve; you will find the hospitality absolutely fantastic! The folks there are extremely appreciative! For example, when locals learned that we were volunteers, they bought us a round of drinks and on another occasion, breakfast.

God called each of us to serve one another...There really is NOTHING more important than this...Get your serve on!

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